DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 161 163 EA 010 987

AUTHOR Klausmeier, Herbert J.
TITLE Federally Supported Educational Research, Development, and Implementation: Some Proposals for Policy Change.
PUB DATE 22 Mar 78
NOTE 12p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (Toronto, Ontario, March 27-31, 1978)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Educational Development; *Educational Research; Federal Aid; Federal Regulation; Federal State Relationship; Research and Development Centers

ABSTRACT

Federally supported educational research and development (R and D) has not fulfilled the high hopes held by its advocates. Even after the advent of the National Institute of Education, some experts believe that no progress occurred in the conduct of federally supported research and development. Others believe that the federal government is taking over all aspects of education supported by federal funds. Through the policy of funding research by requests for proposals, federal officials are dictating not only the substantive areas of research but often its methodology and style of reporting results. Changes in federal policies are needed that take into account the needs and responsibilities of local and state education agencies. Field-initiated research rather than federally directed research should again be encouraged and supported. Field-initiated training programs, particularly for experienced research, development, and implementation personnel should be started. Most important, at least one educational R and D institute and one implementation council should be started in each state with matching federal and state funds, but without federal direction of the programs and activities. Thus, more federal funds would support research in universities and other agencies, new research methods would become more widespread, and quality and accountability of educational R and D would increase. (Author/JM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

H.J. Klausmeier

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

ED161163

3/22/78

Federally Supported Educational Research, Development, and Implementation: Some Proposals for Policy Change*

Herbert J. Klausmeier
V. A. C. Henmon Professor of Educational Psychology
University of Wisconsin--Madison

Informed opinion seems to agree that federally supported educational research and development has not fulfilled the the high hopes held by its leading advocates. The divergence between hopes and reality continues to accelerate as federal agencies increasingly direct and control the educational research and development activities which they support.

David Krathwohl, in 1969, offered constructive criticism of federally supported educational research and development as it was then being carried out. He proposed the establishment of national institutes of education patterned after the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health. The National Institute of Education was in fact established in 1972, although very different from what Krathwohl proposed. After four years of NIE, Clark, in 1976, indicated that no progress had occurred in the conduct of federally supported research and development. He stated:

> If the NIE was or is a necessary condition for progress in federal policies and programs for education R & D, it surely was insufficient. On all fronts the situation has worsened since the establishment of the NIE. Not only has the NIE not achieved the status of an NSF or NIH, it has not even retained the status of the National Council for Educational Research and Development (NCERD). The fiscal support base for educational R & D has not increased over the past two years; it has diminished. The year

EA 010 987

*Paper presentation at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Toronto, March 1978.

before authorization of the NIE, NCERD had a budget of $96.8 million and was requesting $110.8 for FY 72. By FY 75 the NIE's budget level had descended to $70 million. The NIE is publicly under attack by Congress in both the House and the Senate, and its very existence is threatened as it approaches its date of reauthorization.

Clark gave several reasons for the continuing lack of confidence in education R & D by members of Congress and other national policy makers. Two of the reasons he gave are:

> Educational R & D is still a federal educational policy arena without a constituency. This continuing difficulty is more nearly the explanation for the vacillation in and underfunding of federal programs in R & D than either structural (i.e., organizational) problems or the debate over what is or is not being produced by educational R & D. . . .
>
> The initial leadership of the NIE lost the confidence of Congress, on the one hand, and its field constituencies on the other. This should not be interpreted as a sufficient explanation for the current state of affairs. The sharp reductions and eliminations in the laboratory program, the research training support, ESEA Title III, and individual project support preceded the NIE and its leadership. The problem is more pervasive than an individual or group of individuals in leadership positions in an agency.

Joseph Cronin, in 1976, indicated that the continuing dilemma regarding federally funded support of education was that the federal government simply was taking over any aspect of education for which any federal money was supplied. He stated:

> But slowly, inexorably, and incrementally, the federal government is taking over education. Especially since 1965, the country has moved--almost every year--toward a national system of education. Furthermore, the potential opposition has almost conceded the inevitability of the trend, if not all the details. Several major groups will surely fight, or at least modulate, the trend toward federal domination.

Cronin identified the strongest groups fighting federal takeover as the Education Commission of the States, state departments of education, state boards of education, and the foundations.

Since 1976, the situation has worsened drastically. The educational problems in our large cities as reported in the mass media are worse than they were in 1976. Unwise decisions made in one or another federal agency appear to be contributing to the continuing crisis rather than alleviating it. Related to state education agencies, officials of the federal education agencies are attempting to coerce chief state school officers to follow their bidding. In Wisconsin, for example, federal officials would require the chief state school officer to violate some of Wisconsin's Constitutional provisions regarding the separation of public education and church supported education as a condition of receiving support for public education. Related to educational research and development, some high NIE officials, from 1972

through 1977, sought to have discontinued federal appropriations earmarked for support of the regional educational laboratories and centers, so that they would have control of the $20 to $30 million allocated annually to the centers and laboratories in Congressional legislation. Through the policy of funding research through the mechanism of requests for proposals, federal officials are dictating not only the substantive area of the research but in many cases the methodology to be employed and also the style of reporting the results. Many eminent researchers no longer seek NIE support for their research. These remarks are not to be interpreted as criticisms of any single federal employee responsible for administering federal policies and programs. Rather, they are meant to point up unwise federal policy. Individuals to whom broad federal policy and related administrative decisions can be directly attributed can probably not be identified. The federal decision-making process regarding education is so diffuse and involves so many different persons and groups that no one person, group, or agency, except perhaps the Congress itself, can be identified as responsible for any of the deteriorating conditions just enumerated. The operational decision makers in the hierarchy believe they are carrying out the policies of those higher in the hierarchy and the higher ones are responding to what they perceive as a mandate of the Congress, the Executive Branch, or the Courts. The accountability buck never comes to rest with any one or any agency, except perhaps Congress.

The Resolvable Problem

As Clark indicated in 1976, the lack of effectiveness of federally funded educational research and development will not be turned around merely by changing the organization of federal education agencies or bringing in new personnel. The establishment of a new department of education will make

the situation worse if the federal direction of local and state education agencies continues. Profound changes in the federal policy toward research, development, and implementation in education are required.

The problem can be stated in this manner: It is reasonable for the Congress and the Executive Branch to expect that federal funds spent for the improvement of education through the support of educational research and development should yield measurable improvement. However, the federal policy of directing educational research, development, and implementation without reference to the states' responsibilities for education will continue to create more problems than it solves. State and local education agencies are not likely to participate in educational reform and renewal as a response to misguided federal directives. They believe, not without reason, that their knowledge of what is needed and what is feasible in their localities and states exceeds that of recently employed federal officials and hastily assembled councils and panels. Change in federal policies are needed in order to take into account the needs and responsibilities of local school agencies and state education agencies to their constituencies.

Education is very complex and no one programmatic area of research, development, and implementation can possibly bring about permanent educational reform and renewal in each of the 50 states. Several programmatic areas are required. Field-initiated research, rather than federally directed research, should agian be encouraged and supported. Field-initiated training programs, particularly for experienced research, development, and implementation personnel, should be started. And most important, at least one educational R & D institute and one implementation council should be started in each state with federal money and matching state funds, but without federal direction of the programs and activities.

Program Areas Needing Attention

Area 1: Field-Initiated Research--The NIE should encourage and support a substantial program of field-initiated educational research. This program should be administered in a manner similar to that provided under the Cooperative Education Research Act of 1954. The program would replace the current educational research activities directed by the NIE and other federal agencies. A substantial amount of federal funds should be allocated for the conduct of this field-initiated research. These funds should support sets of related studies over long periods of time and should be sufficient to provide for widespread dissemination of the results.

Area 2: Field-Initiated Training Activities--The NIE should encourage and support a substantial program of field-initiated graduate and post-graduate training. This program would provide for the preparation of educational researchers at the graduate level and also for the continuing education of experienced researchers, developers, and implementers. Field-initiated proposals would be received, reviewed, and funded in this training program in a manner similar to proposals for research programs. Assuring an adequate supply of well-educated educational reserach, development, and implementation personnel appears to be more a problem of national that state concern.

Area 3: Establishment and Support of State Educational Research and Development Institutes and State Implementation Councils--The NIE should encourage the establishment of at least one educational R & D institute and also an implementation council in each state. (Populous states would have more than one R & D institute). The state R & D institutes should be funded by the federal government with some percentage of matching state

funds required and without direction of effort, as was provided by the Hatch Act of 1887 and subsequent amendments for colleges of agriculture to carry out agricultural research and development. The state implementation councils should be funded by the federal government with some percentage of matching state funds required and without direction of effort, as provided by the Smith Lever Act of 1914 and subsequent amendments for the support of cooperative agricultural extension.

State educational R & D institutes would function within private or public institutions of higher learning such as the state universities. The staff of each state educational R & D institute would conduct investigations, experiments, and evaluations bearing directly on and contributing to the continuous improvement of education in the state. They would also develop new structures, processes, and materials to improve education and the general welfare of the citizens of the state. Presumably, the results of most of the research and development would have national and international implications as well as within the state.

The state implementation council would function as an integral part of the state education agency, administratively under the chief state school officer and staffed primarily by members of the state education agency. The council would take initiative for developing policies and programs to assure that the state education agency would disseminate information about educational research and development and would work with local education agencies and teacher education institutions in effecting continuous educational reform and renewal. The council would take initiative to develop implementation policies and programs related to research and development conducted by the state educational R & D institute and by others within or outside the state.

A reasonable percentage of all NIE funds, as well as those of other federal agencies allocated to educational research and development, might be allocated to this program of state R & D institutes and implementation councils. A possible formula for allocating funds to the states might be 10 to 20 percent distributed equally to the 50 states, and 80 to 90 percent to each state according to the number of representatives it has in the Congress.

Implications

What might happen if these three proposals were implemented? In connection with Program Area 1--field-initiated research activities--more federal funds would be available than at present to support educational research in institutions of higher learning and in profit-making and non-profit-making agencies. A much larger group of the most able educational researchers would compete for and receive funding for their research. Results of their research would continue to accumulate, to be disseminated, to be used in the state educational R & D institutes and councils, and to contribute to the improvement of education.

Related to Program Area 2--federally supported training programs--interested faculty from colleges, universities, and other organizations would be funded for programs designed to increase the knowledge and skills of present research, development, and implementation personnel and to prepare prospective research, development, and implementation persons. A comparison of current educational journals and books with those of 20 years ago indicates that the quality of educational research has made a great leap forward in two decades. New research methods, sophisticated research designs, data-analysis techniques, and the implementation strategies being reported would become the tools of the large body of experienced research, development, and implementation personnel.

The establishment of an educational R & D institute in each state (Program Area 3) would begin to assure quality of performance, stability of personnel, and accountability in educational research and development, as we see these characteristics in the instructional programs of our universities. Similarly, the establishment of a state implementation council in each state education agency would aid innovative state leaders to focus the agency's efforts on educational reform and renewal. Assuredly, education today is in need of effective, accountable research, development, and implementation within each state, and that is where the primary constituency is. Also, there are many capable researchers, developers, and implementers in education today in each state.

I should like to offer a suggestion that would conserve the research, development, and implementation capabilities of the present regional educational laboratories and university-based R & D centers. The most productive organizations among these should be continued until Program Area 3 becomes established. Then each laboratory and R & D center should have an opportunity to be incorporated into, or become the core of, a state educational R & D institute, a state implementation council, or both. R & D centers or laboratories not desiring to pursue this option could retain their identity and compete for funds under the other two program areas, or a special relationship could be worked out with the NIE for their funding.

The preceding proposals imply a policy of more revenue sharing by the federal government with the states, decentralization of the educational research and development effort to bring it more in line with the older and successful practices in agriculture and vocational education, some support of educational research and development by each participating state, and much less direction of activities by federal agencies. The policies would

would probably be endorsed by most chief state school officers and other officials in state education agencies, some other state officials and state legislators, the higher education community generally, and senators and representatives who would like to have an R & D center and an implementation council located in their home states. Organized labor and organized teachers would probably also support the proposals if they viewed them as contributing to a higher quality of education in the states. Opposition might be expressed by heads of federal education agencies, some federal budget and management officials, and some senators and representatives who feel that a federally directed effort is essential both to identify educational problems of national scope and to direct fiscal and human resources to solve them.

My central proposal is the establishment of an educational R & D institute and an implementation council in each state. This should make it possible to carry out vital educational research, development, and implementation activities in each state that are continuing to be ignored under present policies and practices. For example, when chronic, deepening problems such as low student achievement and student violence are experienced in schools of the state, solutions would be found and implemented cooperatively by personnel of the state educational R & D institute, the implementation council, and the local education agencies. The advancement of education properly remains a state responsibility; federal funding of educational research, development, and implementation should move to support and strengthen this role rather than to create a federal educational system divorced from the states and the local education agencies.

References

Clark, D. L. Federal policy in educational research and development. Educational Researcher, May 1976, 4-9.

Cronin, J. M. The federal takeover: Should the junior partner run the firm? Phi Delta Kappan, April 1976, 499-501.

Krathwohl, D. R. Educational research: Perspective, prognosis, and proposal. Presidential address presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Los Angeles, February 1969. (For a summary, see Hopes for the National Institute of Education. Phi Delta Kappan, June 1971, 575.)